



Bobby Kennedy Candidate for Mayor

Question #1

Transportation.

There is increasing frustration among citizens and visitors alike regarding traffic congestion, particularly on the major routes around and through the city. This is resulting in added commuting time for employees, and delays for trucks and services vehicles moving around and through the city. A previous vision of Council and the City included placing a high priority on the north end connector to ease congestion while reducing green house gas emissions. There have also been past discussions on a second crossing and an improved regional transportation network to make it easier for semis, logging trucks, delivery vehicles, etc. to move through the city to keep the economy moving while ensuring efficient supply lines for commercial businesses.

Q: If elected, aside from improved transit for those that don't require a vehicle to commute or as part of their employment, what would you do to further improve the City's/region's road/transportation network?

A: Any major road construction projects would fall under the provincial government sector and require provincial-federal funding as well as cooperation in order to take place. I would ensure that I was establishing a positive relationship with our provincial transportation and infrastructure minister in order to have a constant update on information regarding any transport and infrastructure initiatives slated for Kelowna.

Kelowna's current traffic problem is in large part due to insufficient planning. We need to spread out our road construction projects throughout the calendar year and not just try to cram multiple projects all at the same time throughout spring and summer. We have chosen to build multiple high density

developments at a much faster rate than we are able to increase the infrastructure that is necessary to accommodate that style of development and that is going to be an issue that will continue to cause a rise in traffic. I believe that if high density development is our focus for the future then our infrastructure should 100% be focused on projects that actually will alleviate traffic by reducing the citizens dependence on cars for daily travel. A large part of our daily traffic comes from West Kelowna residents traveling to Kelowna for work. I would like to band together with the rest of the municipalities that make up our valley and lobby our provincial government to implement a rapid transit rail system that connects the valley from Penticton all the way to Vernon. This type of system is much more future friendly and with YLW and UBCO situated as a centre point we would be providing a huge benefit to a far wider spectrum of travelers and the entire valley would benefit in far greater ways than any short term road construction could provide. Improved transit is the answer in my opinion.

Question #2

Downtown Kelowna.

The downtown Kelowna street environment has changed over the past twelve months. There has been an increase in criminal and nuisance behaviour.

Q: If elected, what role would you as Mayor/Councillor play in ensuring a safe environment for businesses, their employees & customers, and for tourists and residents visiting and living in the downtown area?

A: I do not think that this is a problem that has only occurred in the last twelve months. This issue has been on the rise steadily year after year since 2014. It is only in the last twelve months that it has gotten so out of hand that it has now escalated from a growing concern to an epidemic.

If we would of taken the route of prevention and programs earlier and not policing and persecution we would be much more on top of this problem. The RCMP only has so many resources and personnel to address these issues and it is unfair to constantly continue burdening them with the blame that our streets are out of control. The RCMP have tough enough job already so why are we making it tougher?

I would implement a new strategy focusing on mental health support and create a task force that specialized in dealing with the homeless community and the many different aspects that it takes to properly clean up our streets. With the alarming number of overdose deaths in B.C. and Kelowna we would benefit far greater by increasing first responders and behavior specialist to address this issue as they would have a much stronger impact than police and bylaw have shown, especially when it comes to diffusing problem situations before they escalate to the point where police presence is required.

Question #3

Cost of Government.

The increasing cost of government (municipal tax hikes beyond the rate of inflation, raises in services fees, and development cost charges) are a concern. The Chamber understands the City has a critical role to play in providing services and regulating businesses, but believes in continual efforts to cut red tape, streamline approval processes and explore cost-saving service delivery options.

Q: If elected, how would you address this concern?

A: I would first of all recommend we implement a productivity audit of city hall. I've dealt with the city on matter matters for my own business as an owner as well as an employee for other companies and it

is apparent that the reason things take so long and fees are so high is because there is too many people passing around paper to create work for themselves and not enough actual work getting done.

Once the productivity audit was complete I would sit down with council and discuss what our next steps would be going forward. Sometimes simplifying the current system is the cheapest and most efficient solution.

Question #4

Variable Tax Rates.

Municipal governments have the authority to establish variable tax rates for the various tax classes. Many organizations have called for a ratio that should not exceed 3:1 for commercial vs residential class.

Q: If elected, what would you do to ensure businesses are not carrying an unfair amount of the tax burden, given business owners don't have a vote but still are required to pay for public services, they don't use?

A: I would create an entirely different tax break period. I would create a tax break that would be applied to businesses that hired UBCO and OC students as top priority. This is a two birds one stone benefit and is a simple solution to this question and also a simple way to help ensure we are retaining young professionals in our community and not just grooming top performers for bigger markets to absorb. Our talent pool is very deep here and with our cities growth rate at a much higher volume than the national average it is absolutely crucial we keep these graduates here and give them the opportunity to plant roots successfully. Our city will tremendously benefit from this not only talent wise but big business will take note of this and set up operations here for the facts we are on the rise as a region and that we have a great selection of young people to help their business grow operation wise, while they also benefit tax wise.

Question #5

Dealing with other governments.

Local Government is often called upon by citizens who have concerns about new or existing taxes/regulations that are in place at the provincial/federal level. The proposed speculation tax and provincial health employers' tax are two recent examples of provincial policy that will have a negative impact on small businesses and the economy in Kelowna and elsewhere.

Q: What do you believe is the Mayor's/Council's role in dealing with these concerns?

A: The only way to battle big government is to create a municipal coalition that presents a unified front and does not back down. It is absolutely necessary we stand up to any issue that will negatively impact our city and that is one of the reasons we have different levels of government in the first place. The people who elect the local officials are dependent on having representation that protects and values their best interest regardless of how big the challenge may be. Challenging higher levels of government in regards to your communities best interests is something any local government should be automatically willing to do if initial prior attempts of resolution are unsuccessful or ignored.

Question #6 – submitted by the Canadian Home Builders Association - Kelowna

BC Energy Step Code

Research indicates that homes built pre-1985 use 100% more energy than homes built today. Statistics Canada reports 60% of homes in BC were built before 1985. New homes built this year account for only 1% of housing stock in BC.

Q: If elected, would you support government bringing existing home stock's energy efficiency on par with today's standard of efficiency, before further increasing costs to new construction?

A: I would absolutely encourage that all new homes and homes built prior to 1985 become as energy efficient as possible. Sustainable is key and reducing our carbon foot print as a city is a must. I believe that green energy is not only the future but have high hopes that Kelowna become a shining example of how efficient of a system green energy can be. We must protect our valley and all its natural assets we are blessed with. I will be pushing hard to attract green energy producers to our valley as this industry is growing faster than ever and Kelowna has a major economic opportunity to capitalize on alongside the obvious environmental benefits.

Question #7 – submitted by the Urban Development Institute - Kelowna

Affordability.

The issue of housing affordability has grown in prominence over the years with many people finding it more difficult to afford to live in the place where they work.

Q: If elected, what would you do to help address this difficult and complex issue?

A: I would first and foremost work on attracting new industry to our region to provide more jobs and better paying jobs. The Cannabis industry is a prime example of an industry that our region already excels at underground and with legalization just around the corner we have a huge opportunity to capitalize on this already proven industry. I also believe that the mindset of bigger is better is coming to an end and would look to new solutions that maximize living units to land ratio such as the highly efficient shipping container community model that is popping up all over the globe. The taco stand downtown in the laneway behind Earls restaurant is a prime example of how this strategy can also be applied to business. If you do further research into this strategy for affordable housing you will find that it is not just one of the most cost effective solutions, it is also one of the most visually appealing solutions. In my opinion these carbon friendly homes are an architectural marvel.